

Alaska State Library
Historical Collections

Guide to Collection

Herning, Orville George

Diaries of Orville G. Herning, in Knik and Wasilla, Alaska, 1898-1947

MS 16

2 boxes (4 v.)
1 linear ft.

Processed By: Staff

ACQUISITION: The original manuscripts may be found in the Alaska and Polar Regions Collections of the Rasmuson Library, University of Alaska Fairbanks.

ACCESS: The collection is unrestricted, however the volumes are very fragile and the bindings have deteriorated.

COPYRIGHT: Request for permission to publish or reproduce material from the collection should be discussed with the Librarian.

PROCESSING: The volumes of typescript are housed in acid-free folders and boxes. No conservation measures have been taken on the bindings, which are deteriorating on some. Items added to the collection are filed in acid free folders. Fragile items are sleeved in Mylar.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

O.G. Herning, christened Orville George, was born July 30, 1863, in Eyota, Minnesota. He taught rural schools until 1888 then went into a produce business with D.W.A. Roby. They later moved to Nagatuck, Conn., where Roby had relatives. In 1894 Mr. Herning married Martha A. Rogers of Nagatuck, Conn. and had a son, G. Stanley Herning.

In 1897 the E.C. Davis company, Boston brokers, began to recruit men to go to Alaska to prospect and locate gold claims. O.G. Herning was to head up one of the groups. He went to Tyonek in 1898 to manage an exploration company. Mr. Herning settled in Knik and then in Wasilla, Alaska, managing the Klondike and Boston Gold Mining and Manufacturing Co., then established the Knik Trading Post. His diaries span almost 50 years of his life in these areas.

Beginning in 1898, Mr. Herning drew, published and sold three different maps of the Upper Cook Inlet mining area showing trails, geographical features and mineral areas. He was also an excellent photographer and from time to time wrote articles for various newspapers and trade magazines. [From: Louise Potter, Pre-Diary Notes.]

SCOPE AND CONTENTS NOTE

Collection includes 3 typescript volumes: "The Alaskan Diaries of Orville George Herning of Knik and Wasilla, 1900-1947," prepared by Louise Potter, 1963-1966. Volume 4 is a typescript for diaries discovered at a later date, for the years 1898, 1899, 1902. Typescript prepared by Louise Potter.

Box 2 contains a name index of persons listed in the diaries, also prepared by Louise Potter.

INVENTORY

Box 1 Diaries

Folder 1

The first thirty years in the life of O.G. Herning of Knik and Wasilla, 1868-1898, by Louise Potter. [includes "A Bicycle Trip in 1896 From naugatuck, Conn." By O.G. Herning.] [photocopy]

Folder 2

Vol.1: "The Alaska Diaries of O.G. Herning, Manager of the Klondike and Boston Gold Mining Company and owner manager of the Knik trading Co. of Knik and Wasilla.[1900-1916]

Folder 3

Vol. 2: "The Alaska Diaries of Orville G. Herning of Knik and Wasilla. January 1, 1917 through December 31, 1935."

Folder 4

Vol. 3: "The Alaska Diaries of Orville G. Herning of Knik and Wasilla.... January 1, 1936 through April 10, 1947." Includes index to three volumes.

Folder 5

Vol. 4: "The Alaskan Diaries of O.G. Herning, Manager of Expedition No. 4 of the Klondike and Boston Gold Mining and Manufacturing Company to the Upper Cook Inlet Area." Includes outfitting lists, contracts, letters and reports. 1898, 1899, 1902.

Box 2 Name index

Names mentioned in the Herning diaries (1898-1947) and data about the person in some cases. Also included are 50 names from Charles Cadwallader's account of his trip over the Iditarod Trail, 1917-1919.

These persons are chiefly those who lived in or on nearby homesteads, passed through Knik or Wasilla, or operated roadhouses on the Iditarod Trail. Some names are included from Tyonek, Susitna Station, Matanuska Junction, Palmer, Eska, Sunshine, Hope, Seward, Seldovia, etc.

A card is also included of "outfits" mining in Broad Pass that were named in the Knik News, April 10, 1915.